

REMARKS

Claims 11-13 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-10 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein, and claims 11-13 are amended.

Applicant acknowledges and thanks the Examiner for indicating that claims 11-13 contain allowable subject matter.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration as the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (d) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (e) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 3, 4 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Midorikawa (U.S. Patent No. 6,373,893); rejects claim 2 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Midorikawa; rejects claims 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Midorikawa in view of Komori (U.S. Patent No. 6,493,391); and rejects claims 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Midorikawa in view of Malladi (U.S. Patent No. 5,912,676). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

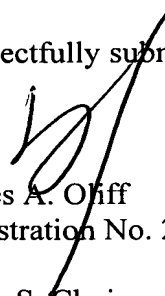
Claims 1-10 are canceled, and thus the rejections with respect to these claims are now moot.

Claims 11-13 have been rewritten in independent form and the Office Action indicated that claims 11-13 contain allowable subject matter.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 11-13 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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